Albert Chou:

This is IT Visionaries, your number one source for actual insights and exclusive interviews with CIOs, CTOs, and CSOs, and many more. I'm your host, Albert Chou, a former CIO, former sales VP, and now podcast host.

Joyce:

I'm at the buffet table. I have a plate that says, "I need automation". It'll save me time. It'll automate manual processes. I'm standing with this plate eager to get automation. And I know Salesforce is a great company, so I want it. I'm looking at the buffet table and saying, "Should I take a salad? Does the dressing go on the salad or does it go on the bread? How many pieces of bread should I take?" My primary goal is to bring that together as a seamless experience and give customers the ability to pick and choose with the right cost, the right licenses for the right personas. That's what will enable people to adopt more.

Albert Chou:

Automation has the potential to revolutionize the way companies operate across a broad spectrum of industries. But why are so many companies still hesitant to embrace it? Tackling this issue are two top minds from the leading CRM platform and our sponsor, Salesforce. Joyce Paul, the Director of Research and Insights and Shalini Mayor, the Senior Director of Enterprise Automation. Tune in to hear Joyce and Shalini discuss how Salesforce is collaborating with their customers to make automation faster, easier to implement, and more personalized than ever. And if you missed our automation series featuring guests from Vantage, Autodesk and others, check out the show notes for links to those episodes. IT Visionaries is powered by Salesforce platform and Dreamforce 2022. Catch the news and insights coming out of Dreamforce this year for free on Salesforce +. Just visit salesforce.com/plus. Content will start rolling on September 20th. Shalini, Joyce, both of you, welcome to the show.

Shalini Mayor:

Thank you.

Joyce:

Thank you for inviting us. Appreciate it.

Shalini Mayor:

Yeah, we're very excited to be here.

Albert Chou:

Yes. Listen, I think you guys both have really interesting roles. I'm excited to learn what you know about automation. Before we get into it, I've been working with Salesforce and other CRMs for a large part of my career. And of course, when the customer record changes, a lot of things happen. For example, closing a deal or upgrades of service, whatever happens in the CRM, a lot of things typically happen downstream. Back in the day, we used to manually do all of this. Super annoying. Of course, automation is now bigger part of our lives. Smarter automation is also here.

Albert Chou:

So I'm going to start this conversation off a little bit differently. We've had a lot of guests talk about how impressive and how important automation is and how much work and free thought it unlocks. So then I got to ask the question and I'm going to start with you, Joyce. What is any reservation that is now left? Why aren't more companies adopting automation faster, sooner? Is it a will problem? Is it a people problem? What is happening that is slowing this down? Because I feel like this is something every company should already be taking on. So Joyce, we'll start with you and kick us off. Why aren't more companies going into automation faster?

Joyce:

Yeah, absolutely. Automation has been around for decades and I think it's important for us to understand the automation landscape of our customers. It's important for us to understand the micro and macro jobs they do, the user journeys across different jobs and technology touchpoints, and to do some deep thinking about the life cycles of the automation jobs and the fluid nature of each persona. So for example, if I start off as an admin and I'm like, okay, I don't know anything about automation, but let me try doing this one thing in Flow, right? I'm not an automation developer, but I start learning these things. And then slowly, I grow. So my persona keeps changing and I think companies are not delivering end to end solutions that cater to real time problems. And they're also not catering to how each persona changes during the life cycle of the project or during their own personal growth.

Joyce:

And then there are issues of pricing. Does the solution match the work that I'm trying to do? Do I have to get third party applications because a company solution is not complete based on their scenario. So there are lots of things that need to be put together to provide a solution that people are eager to buy. And then who are you aiming towards? Are you aiming towards the CIOs and the IT buyers? Or are you aiming to catch the customer? So the customer is usually not the person who pays money for it. Somebody else is taking that decision somewhere up the ladder and they have a different opinion on what automation can do for them and whether it's worth the money that they're spending. But then the people end of line, the people who are actually at the end of that process chart, who are doing the work, they may have different requirements.

Joyce:

For them, the proficiency and the efficiency of their processes might be really worth something. But then the person who's actually paying the dollars might think differently. So it's a combination of so many things; pricing, especially for automation, the number of flows you run, the number of integrations you do, what third part, what sources of data are you touching? How do you pull the data to then create data transformations and create automations? So I think our thinking has to expand a little bit more and not just provide specific cool technology solutions. Hey, this is cool technology. So we're going to build it and we expect everybody to buy it. No. You have to look at jobs to be done. You have to look at the spectrum of personas that are doing the work and then figure out what are the underserved areas.

Joyce:

Think of it as a theatrical production, if you will. I have to do something from act one all the way to act three: beginning, ending, stage lights, props, costume, everything has to come together for the play to be successful. Same thing with automation. If I am doing automation for my company, everything has to come together before I can deploy it. And once I deploy it, it has to work really well. It's a one time

show. You do it well, it's great. Especially if I'm in finance or banking. One thing goes wrong, how does that work? So your show has to be perfect. And I think that's the reason adoption is not as great as it should be because we are not looking at it in this concerted way. That's what I think. That's why we need to start, perhaps.

Albert Chou:

Yeah, I totally get that. Shalini, for yourself, when you're working directly with the customers of Salesforce and other teams that the enterprise accounts, what are their reservations or hold ups, because this is one of those things where I think there's so many use cases that you have of success. So what makes someone say, let me learn a little bit more. What are they nervous about?

Shalini Mayor:

Yeah. So based on what Joyce was saying, I just wanted to add, she is spot on because I see this day to day, I'm seeing this issue all the time because there's always this challenge between what we really want to do and then where do we want to invest? There's that whole big thing going on there. But in addition, I think when we're thinking about challenges that our customers face and for me, the customers are the enterprise.

Shalini Mayor:

All of our enterprise business partners and the challenges that they're having day to day right now, it's not about automation. They all believe it. They all want more automation. But I think the problem is the ease of use of automation. I do robotic process automation. We came in with the idea that, "Okay, this is going to be easy. We have a tool we can come in, we can build bots". But then when you actually get in there, you realize the challenges that we have in doing it. It's not easy. It's definitely not easy. And that's one of the challenges, I think, that we've taken on this year and we're really trying to make it easy for everybody to do automation and in fact, build their own automation.

Albert Chou:

So let's stay with you for a second Shalini. How do we make it easier? Because I know some people that are in robotic process automation, whether in the service sector or they're actually building the technology that supports it. They talk about how it's a different mindset because you have to really be thoughtful and all the planning that goes into place so you understand the downstream upstream impacts that an automation will have. And of course, probably the number one fear people always have, or it seems to me is like edge cases. Inevitably, they'll get in the planning mode and someone will think, but what if, and then that's like, it holds everything up because they're trying to account for 100% of the possible outcomes rather than maybe 80% of the possible outcomes. In your opinion, what can be done to make the implementation better, faster, more efficient, or maybe it doesn't need to be faster, it just needs to be better with more confidence. I'd love to hear your input. How do we create that better process?

Shalini Mayor:

Right. Great question. So when I was brought into Salesforce, everybody was doing automations everywhere. And not having a holistic approach of how we plan to do automations is one of the biggest challenges we have. And when I came in, it was actually very interesting, because I was brought in primarily for robotic process automation when we started out, because everybody was talking about it

and I'm talking four years ago. So you're talking about slowness right talking four years ago, almost, right where everybody's talking about it and RP has been around longer.

Shalini Mayor:

But the first thing that we did, and this is something I think I have to say. Our leadership saw this as the real issue, which is not having a plan, not having something where you know, that which is why when I came in, the first thing I did was I built out a center of excellence. So the first thing. I didn't go out there and start saying, "Oh, where's our use cases?" I started saying, "Okay. What's our governance going to be? How are we going to have intake? How will we decide? How will we prioritize things? How are we going to look at everything and do the assessment so that we are consistent in whether we're doing cost savings or we're doing another business problem, like compliance or risks". And I think those things were key in just setting the program up and setting that foundational program up.

Shalini Mayor:

Now that we have done that, I think what we are now looking at after that was okay, what is the tool that we're going to use? What is the right tool for the things that we are looking at doing? That is where the focus then shifted. And the last thing then we started doing was, okay, where our business and as part of the COE, we also did take our business partners input did count even then, but we opened our intake only after we had laid out the foundations and we had our governance in place and we knew what we wanted, how we wanted to proceed with this.

Albert Chou:

So what you just said reminds us of this exercise we're currently doing at Mission, which is we're learning Jim Collins' Good to Great. And he talks about how technology's actually to the end of the decision tree. Like you mentioned, the people is actually first. Joyce, in your experience, when you do this research and you're studying how teams are building these teams of teams to be better at automation, what are you seeing in terms of the characteristics? Because that's, I think, an easy thing to say, but probably how do I get started? A center of excellence. Now I agree. I need that. Okay. Who's involved? How do I pick these people?

Joyce:

Right. And I wanted to add to what Shalini said. When I first came in, I came in from Microsoft and Microsoft has an entire ecosystem. So if I'm doing automation within the sphere of automation, there is so many connected technologies and solutions that I can use because I'm in the ecosystem. For Salesforce, when I came in, I realized that our customers don't have that ecosystem. So for example, if you're in sales cloud or marketing cloud, you have a different perspective of automation. If you are in platform, you have a different perspective of automation. And then we have so many acquisitions. MuleSoft is here, Omnistudio is here. How do these things fit in? So one of the first things I did is created what I call... It's my personal pet project. I call it umbrella of automation. So if I were to open up an umbrella and write automation on it, what would it encompass inside Salesforce?

Joyce:

And how are these things connected? That is the steel thread or the golden thread that I felt nobody was thinking about. Maybe they were thinking about it, but it was just not priority. So from a user research perspective, from a research and insights perspective, it was important for me to say, if I am a customer and I don't care what customer I am, I could be an admin, I could be our automation

developer, I could be a CIO, whoever I am, if I come into the world of Salesforce and I say, "What are the automation solutions available for me?" There is no single place where they can go to and say, I need to do A, B, and C. So I'll get a little bit of this, two licenses of this and that and that and that and that. How do I fill my plate?

Joyce:

I'm at a buffet table. I have a plate that says, "I need automation." It's awesome. It'll save me time. It'll automate manual processes. I'm standing with this plate eager to get automation. And I know Salesforce is a great company. So I'm looking at the bus buffet table and saying, "Should I take a salad? Does the dressing go on the salad? Or does it go on the bread? How many pieces of bread should I take? Should I take fish, entree, vegan?" I have no idea.

Joyce:

So I think for me, my primary goal is to bring that together as a seamless experience and give customers the ability to pick and choose with the right cost, the right licenses for the right personas for the right. And I think that's what will enable people to adopt more, having the knowledge and the ability to take what's best for them at the best price, with the best solutions based on what their problem is. We have to solve the problem that the customers have. In addition to creating cool technology, which people may or may not use sometimes, we have to solve their problem. And that's what Shalini is doing with center of excellence and what I'm doing with the ecosystem of automation, will all come together and be this glorious thing that will change our lives, honestly.

Albert Chou:

So that's a great point because I'll use the example of being asked to, for example, fix my house. If I were to go do a bathroom remodel and I were to go to home Depot, and if you were to ask me what I need, I'd be like, I'm clueless. I'm literally clueless. I don't know what I need tools. And I don't know what people I need. How am I supposed to do a bathroom remodel by myself? It makes total sense that if I'm going into automation, I'm going to lean on people. I'm going to lean on... Someone has to guide me through this process.

Albert Chou:

For either one of you, I'd love to hear your answer, who is the best combination of people do you think that is to team up because we heard this through both of your answers, whether sometimes it's the users that need automation, but then the buyer is not sure of what projects to go in. You mentioned earlier that the toolkits, it's not clear, because there's a lot of tools. Salesforce is a big company. It's got a lot of tools, a lot of options, so it's not really clear. Maybe I need what I need. And then you mentioned, Shalini, it's also you need diverse thoughts. You need people that can do this planning. If I'm a company coming to, how do I get started, I guess? This is the best thing. I think this is a great idea. How do I get started?

Shalini Mayor:

So something I think that is so beyond the center of excellence and beyond all of this stuff, we realize that this is a gap, right? Exactly what you just brought up. And the solution that we have for this is we're actually in the process right now, at least for Salesforce, and I don't see any reason why our customers can't do the same thing, is we are building out a community of practice. Anyone that wants to, has any interest in automation can actually come in, join that community, and we're learning from each other.

This is a place where people can come in. They can collaborate. They can actually, whatever automate automations they're building. So you asked about tools. It depends on the problem. We can't have a solution built first. We have to know the problem. And every problem comes in with a different solution or a different set of solutions.

Shalini Mayor:

Even today, for example, I started off by talking about RPA. We quickly realized that when you're looking at a process end to end, RPA is a tiny part of it. What about the rest of it? If I still have to have people manually doing a repetitive task for the rest of it, what have I gained really? So now we started to look at things like we brought in MuleSoft, the MuleSoft family of products. You are probably aware. So MuleSoft has just acquired a RPA company as well, Servicetrace. It's now called MuleSoft RPA. And it's a great addition to their tool set because now we've got MuleSoft Anypoint for our integrations. That leads to really fast integrations because the connection's already built. The connector's already there. We've got Composer for ease of use. We talked about either ease of use earlier, which is so important. We want to do a no code, low code kind of deployments.

Shalini Mayor:

And then we have our RPA now. In addition, we're bringing in Slack. So we are like customer zero for all of our Salesforce products, when you think about it. And all of these solutions can totally be it because our business processes don't change that much. People may have different systems and applications, but at the end of the day, when you're doing invoice processing, everybody in the world is doing invoice processing. Everybody in the world is going through legal contracts. Everybody's going through onboarding an employee or off-boarding an employee. The problems are similar.

Shalini Mayor:

And so our solutions hopefully will benefit our customers. Our learnings, our solutions will benefit our customers. So when we have this community of practice, we call it automation hub. People can come in, they can upload their automations in there and we can create a repository of reusable assets. It's almost like app exchange where you can come in, upload it, people can then download it based upon their particular problems and then customize it to whatever their needs are. And that's how we're addressing it.

Albert Chou:

So that hub concept got me fired up because I was thinking about on my personal level, I use... In my personal life, obviously I don't need Salesforce and it's family of tools to do what I do at home. But I do use tools and I do want them connected. And for example, like you said, there's certain things that happen every month. I'd love to be automated. So I get Zapier. And then I get, you mentioned the community, the automation hub. On Zapier, there's tons of people building little, they call them zaps, things that I can do to make it easy for myself. So is this what's happening at Salesforce? This automation time people are, "Hey, I figured out this new quote to cash thing." From the moment I send out a proposal to the moment I actually receive cash. So many steps in the process. I've automated that. Here, check it out, enterprises, I've built this. Is that what's happening? People are coming with the automations and it makes it easier for me to say, "Yeah, want that."

Shalini Mayor:

That's the idea. That is exactly the idea there. Because I think, otherwise, what's happening is we are a huge company. We are 77,000 plus company. I have never worked for a company that big and just the magnitude of it, of getting out there to every employee to make their lives better, it's a huge task. And the only way we can do this is by learning and collaborating together, because otherwise we're going to be reinventing the wheel constantly working in silos.

Albert Chou:

So Joyce, what type of impact is this activity going to have in your role doing the research and insights and understanding people. Is this a major step? I'm assuming this is a major accelerator because now I don't have to reinvent the wheel. We just talk about hard is to even pick the tools. But if I'm picking the solutions first, I feel like that's going to be easy. Like, "Oh I have that problem. This is how I solved it." And then it's like, you're going reverse. And then it's like, this is the tools that you need to actually do that thing.

Joyce:

Providing templates and providing easier to use flows. Right now, I think flow is still difficult. Based on my conversations with customers, even flow experts find it sometimes hard to do things like data integrations and how do you pull data from other systems like Oracle and how do you manipulate it and transform it and load it and make sure that you are getting what you want to do. Usability obviously needs some more work so that it's easier for people. And then if we can really go to a low code scenario, I mean we keep... All companies are talking about low code, no code. Have we reached a point, we as in all of the industry, not just Salesforce, have we reached a point where we are really no code? No, we haven't. Have we reached a point where some of us are decently low code. Yes, we have.

Joyce:

And it's a constantly morphing scenario and it's a constantly morphing persona. As low code, no code becomes declarative tools become more easy and more prevalent. Anyone can manifest complex automations. The thing I find fascinating from a research perspective is what I am calling, and it's not an industry standard, I'm calling it a morphing persona. We are humans. We change. We grow. I am not the same persona I was five years ago. So I cannot say developer persona for automation is like this today and it will stay this forever. It will change. In as shorter time as three months or two months. Then, who am I studying as a researcher? I'm studying a moving target. And as technology moves, my target moves and morphs. So I'm calling it a morphing persona. Are my insights durable? The jobs to be done are the same like Shalini said. The process of creating an invoice is still the same.

Joyce:

Then how durable are my insights? How does my job to be done landscape change as the job performer does these what I call mini graduations. They graduate now, they can make decently complex flows in Salesforce, in flow builder. As an ethnographer, this opens up very, very exciting possibilities from a longitudinal study perspective. If I were to study how automation grows in the next few years, what is it going to be like? Is it persona change? Is it behavior change? Is it task change? And how can I tie it back to product development and make sure that we are building solutions to resolve problems in underserved areas, not overserved areas where there are five other competitors who are already solving the same problem. How do we identify those? And that's where research comes in, and jobs to be done comes in, and problem hypothesis comes in and you say, you study the changing landscape.

Joyce:

It's a moving target so you constantly study it and constantly update your insights and make sure they're translatable. Generally speaking, 86% of employees surveyed believe that automation will help them to increase productivity and growth. However, only 11% of employers are looking to automate their processes as a substitute for human labor. Look at the difference. 86% want things to be automated. 11% of employers are willing to put money into it.

Joyce:

So there is this huge, tremendous opportunity for all of us. 67% of companies use business process automations that improve the visibility like a manager has to see what's happening. Think of Amazon, purchasing things on Amazon. Where is the thing in that entire process? Where am I? Did something happen here? Did something happen here? Was it successful? 67% of companies use this. Only 24% of companies have started implementing low code process automations. So more and more companies are jumping onto the automation bandwagon. Hyper automation is a thing now. I mean, it's been a thing for a while. I think it's a great, great place to be working and I'm very excited to be working in this space. And very soon, hopefully, more things will be automated than before.

Shalini Mayor:

Absolutely. I think it's a game changer if it's done correctly. I think that's the-

Joyce:

If done correctly.

Shalini Mayor:

Yeah.

Albert Chou:

Well, then I got to ask what are some of your favorite examples of what's possible because you got... I think it was mentioned throughout each of your responses. A lot of times, people fall back to what they know. And so maybe you've identified what someone else has already automated and you think, "Oh, I can do that too". But, the true innovation as you suggested there for just a moment, Joyce, is like, what are, it's going to be unlocked? What's the future hold? And when either of you, kick it off, Shalini, I'd love to hear because it sounds like you work closer with your existing customers. Who's doing things that.... Or you're just impressed by this company. And if you can name them, of course, we'd love to hear. If you can't, totally understand. But who's doing something that's quite innovative where you're like, "Wow. I did not think that that was going to be possible, but that is going to really unlock productivity. It's going to make it better for workers." Any of your favorite examples? We'd love to hear them.

Shalini Mayor:

So Salesforce works at a speed that I don't think other companies really do. It's unbelievable. I did not think so. I thought that we were being very slow in the work that we were doing and where we're trying to go until I go out there and I talk to some of the other industry leaders. And when I'm looking at their automations, I realize, whoa, we are ahead of them actually in a lot of different things that we are doing. And I think a lot of this is based on some of the acquisitions that we've done recently. They have helped

us move forward immensely. When Slack came in, we were thinking, "Oh, that's great for messaging." No, we're doing Slack bots right now. We're actually doing Slack bots as attendant bots to run automations whenever you want. Something that we, otherwise, they're all scheduled automations that we were doing.

Shalini Mayor:

When you look at Tableau and we talked about at the foundations of when you're trying to do product development, bring in automation at that time. Why are we waiting until after the fact? Because I think that's what's slowing people down as well. And so I would love to think of other industries that are progressing as fast as we are, but I don't think they've done quite what we are trying to do, which is we're a very small team and I have a whole enterprise of automations to do. How do we do that? We can do it ourselves. So we are actually trying to empower people to build their own. So we're trying to get our employees to make it easy enough for employees. So we talked about low code, no code. Make it easy enough for employees to be able to, even a business partner does not need to know what is an API.

Shalini Mayor:

They can use MuleSoft to integrate into the API. They just know, oh yeah, I have to connect into Oracle or I have to connect into Concur. I have to connect into any of the systems that I use for my process. Okay, I know where to go. All I have to say is here's where I need to connect into. Now, I need to do this process in and here's the details of that process. And then here's the output. Here's where I want to deploy it. So make it easy enough for people, a business partner who doesn't understand any of the technical details to be able to pull this together and create an automation, because that's what's really going to be the scale and growth of our... Because we have a huge backlog across and that's where I think the acceleration needs to come in, is make it easy enough for people to do their own and build their own bots.

Albert Chou:

Listen, you just said Concur. So that's usually expenses, man. I think everyone who's done expenses knows that is not fun. So whoever's in charge of all expenses, there's got to be something they can automate.

Joyce:

The other thing that's difficult, you asked about who's doing really well. Who's spectacular in the industry. I think different companies are doing well in different areas, and the reason is automation touches everything. It touches every industry, HR IT, health, manufacturing, finance, marketing, sales. We did this large scale survey on how people prioritize automation processes across industries. Every industry has nuances that make their automation special for them. So there's no one company, as of now, that can provide all these solutions across all industries. When that happens, I would be like, "Yep, they are the ones." And I'm hoping Salesforce is that company.

Albert Chou:

For yourselves, how do you personally, or what automations have made your existing work easier? I'd love to ask that too. What's directly benefited you the most where you're like, "Wow, this has been super helpful."

Shalini Mayor:

So for us, for example, in our weekly meetings, we have to fill out our agenda and everybody has to provide the inputs. We have a quick Slack bot that tells us every... There's a reminder that's automatically sent out to everybody that says come on in, fill this thing out. This is a day to day stuff because there are so many status meetings that go on every week. That helps my job immensely because now the whole team gets the reminders. I don't have a person having to do it. There's your automation right there.

Albert Chou:

Super simple. But yeah, it doesn't have to be complicated to make your life a lot easier.

Shalini Mayor:

No.

Albert Chou:

Joyce, how about yourself?

Joyce:

Lots. I think they're all little things. I'm not talking specifically for Salesforce, but my life in general, if I want to get prescriptions from Rite Aid earlier, I had to physically go to Rite Aid and get it and stand in line. Now, I just get a little text saying, Hey, do you want it delivered free of cost to your house? Really? When did that happen? So I just clicked on it and no login, nothing required, Just date of birth and last name. And it says, "Oh you have Tylenol or whatever, do you want to do you me to send it home?" I say, yes.

Joyce:

And then there's a very, very simple UI. Credit card and date or expiration or whatever. The process has become so simple that it just elevates the quality of your life. Whether it's automating reminders, whether like Shalini said, it's about agenda or it's Concur traveling. I booked travel for Dreamforce. It was so easy. I got a confirmation. My travel approval came. I just had to click a few buttons. It told me which hotels I'm allowed to book, and then it automatically comes on my calendar. All of those things are so much easier. My life becomes so much easier.

Albert Chou:

Well, listen. These are all great points about how automation changes our lives. And it's a lot of times I think I always feel like it happens so slowly that you don't really notice it. And so I'm really hoping that in the next couple years, we start noticing it in big waves where we see huge changes into how we work. Because Joyce, you mentioned it for example, that who we are and what we care to do or what we maybe don't want to do anymore is constantly changing. We see that right now in the [inaudible 00:30:43], the workforce changes, there's people have different demands for different, let's call them, occupations. Certain industries are having a hard time just getting people to come back to work. And so I'm sure there's a race to figure out, "Hey, how do we get those tasks automated?" Whether it's worth robots or software, it doesn't matter. The reality is, like Joyce, you hit on it, the people are asking to do different things now. So if no one's going to do it and it still needs to get done, then automation really is the only viable solution.

Joyce:

And automation is increasingly influencing what we do with the pandemic being so widespread and taking hold of our regular lives. Automation, I think post pandemic is no longer a distant future endeavor that we see in the movies. Oh, this will happen. It's become a necessity because of what's happened through the pandemic and our safety cloud automation is a super great example of that. It's literally changed the way we host events in the post COVID world. And you asked for a big example of how automation has impacted my life? Safety cloud. How we were tested when we went for CKO, that was brilliant. And I couldn't believe it was happening; like getting scanned and people knowing who's tested positive, who's negative. It was just mind blowing how easy that huge conference had become.

Shalini Mayor:

Innovation is changing the way our behaviors as well. If you think about it, look at how smartphones have transformed us. They've basically retrained us to do things in different ways. My house today is automated. I have a smart automation home. I can turn on light switches. I can do whatever I want. Everything now is automated in our lives. And so it's cool.

Albert Chou:

I still got a dumb house. I'm not going to lie, I still have a dumb house. I haven't installed any of those devices. I recognize fully that they're available, but I could see that the fact that you can connect your phone to the lights so that when you're within range, your lights could come on. You don't even need to schedule it. The whole idea of, oh, schedule, why do I need to schedule? Just turn them on when I show up. That's so much easier.

Joyce:

And in the post COVID world, I really, really feel like we are in a much more vibrant space. Being very positive about the whole pandemic, folks have pressure to deliver efficiency and cost savings right now. Businesses are shutting down. So many businesses have shut down. Survival is key. And if survival is key, then efficiency in processes is paramount. Isn't it? And when efficiency in processes is paramount, then automation services come into being. It's just automatically become the crux of our innovation and our survival and future, pretty much.

Albert Chou:

Absolutely. It's been awesome having you both on for today's episode of IT Visionaries. And normally, our lightning round is a little bit more about personal, but you know what? We're going to mix a little bit of personal and business. So the lightning round is brought to us by Salesforce platform, the number one cloud platform for digital transformation, rev experience. Shalini, Joyce, this is where we ask you questions about your life outside of work, but I'm going to mix it because I want to bring automation the theme. So let's start with a fun question. Tell me something you want automated for yourself right now. It's not available, but you want it. Shalini, let's start with you. What would you like automated.?

Shalini Mayor:

Okay. And I'm going to talk about work for a second. I would love to have my time sheet automated, where you can actually scan my calendar, take a look at where my time was spent and go ahead and pre-fill the stuff for me. I would love that because I have to take time out every time to go through my whole entire week and say, what did I do this week? I did a lot. What did I do?

Albert Chou:

I can agree with that. I need that too. Joyce, how about yourself?

Joyce:

My biggest time absorber is trying to analyze interview sessions. I interview a lot of people. It's all qualitative data. And then I have to go through it despite having tools like Dovetail. I want a magic solution that'll go through all my interview notes, magically create post-its and create video clips and then come up with an inside summary so I just have to click a button and my report will be ready.

Albert Chou:

I want that too. This is exactly what we do a mission with these interviews. I need someone to cut out all the... Cause right now, you know what we do? We cut out all the 'ums' and 'ahs' manually. We manually go through, say, 'um', 'ah', I got to cut that out. It's like, why can't that just be lifted right out of there?

Joyce:

Let me harass you. Um, ah, um.

Albert Chou:

We'll leave those in so we prove the point. When you guys aren't thinking about automation, what do you do for fun? Shalini, what do you do for fun outside of work.

Shalini Mayor:

Hiking. I love hiking. I love being outdoors. I hate being stuck to a computer.

Albert Chou:

How about you, Joyce?

Joyce:

I run my own business. I have a dance studio. I run a non-profit called SCARF, Socially Conscious Artist Foundation. The goal is to create and foster art that brings awareness around social issues. So most of my time is spent doing that. Then I sit down and do some pranayama and some meditation to gather myself. And then I also like painting, cooking, singing, animals. I talk to trees.

Albert Chou:

Talk to trees.

Joyce:

All of that.

Shalini Mayor:

Where do you have time for all of this? Your life must be pretty automated.

Joyce:

No, it's not. That's why I need more automation to make my life easy.

Albert Chou:

Listen, I love hearing that when you go, whether you're hiking or doing, I hear a lot of solo, quiet activities. I think that's just so necessary for everyone who's in the tech space to... It's weird how tech innovation comes to so many people when they're not involved fingers on the keyboard when they're doing something else.

Albert Chou:

Well, Joyce, Shalini, it was awesome having you today on IT Visionary. Thanks for sharing with some of the things that are happening at Salesforce, how teams can get together to automate faster, whether it's building those guides for information, Joyce, so that we can figure out what services we need to Shalini, getting a center of excellence of some knowledgeable people and maybe some examples of things that have been done before. These are all things I think that are going to be super helpful because I sit where I think most people sit, which is, "Hey, I know there's things in my life that I want automated or work that I want automated, but I don't really know how to get started." And sometimes looking at too many things or too many people, for example, if I talk to a hundred people, I'll get a hundred opinions. This is not good.

Joyce:

We need that menu card when you go to the automation buffet.

Albert Chou:

Yeah. But like you said, problem centric. Here are the problems that have been solved. So I can be like, "Oh, I want to solve that problem. I want to solve that problem." Not, "Here are all my solutions. I don't even know what that is."

Joyce:

Yeah. So there should be-

Shalini Mayor:

Exactly.

Joyce:

... menu item jobs to be done, problem on the side instead of the price. That's what we...

Albert Chou:

There we go.

Joyce:

Yeah. Joyce, we should talk.

Albert Chou:

There you go.

Joyce:

I think I have something for you.

Albert Chou:

Thanks for joining us, everyone on IT Visionaries.

Joyce:

Thank you so much.

Shalini Mayor:

Thank you so much.

Albert Chou:

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